CITY OF LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA

Website Redesign & Development
Request for Quote

This RFQ is for design and development services for a new website for the City of Lexington, VA.

RFQ Sent: February 17, 2016
Responses Due: March 11, 2016

Send any questions on the RFQ to:

> Gregory Switzer
> Network Engineer
> gswitzer@lexedu.org

Send proposals to (both email and mail formats are acceptable):

> Gregory Switzer
> Network Engineer
> gswitzer@lexedu.org
>
> City of Lexington
> ATTN: Gregory Switzer
> 300 E. Washington St.
> Lexington, VA 24450

Website budget: approx. $20,000

Goal for launch: July 1, 2016

City of Lexington Overview

Lexington is a small city in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. Founded in 1778, it is a city steeped in history and home to two prestigious universities. Prior to the Civil War, Stonewall Jackson was an instructor at the Virginia Military Institute. Following the war, Robert E. Lee was president of Washington College until his death in 1870, and the school was renamed Washington and Lee University in his honor. Much of the city's economy revolves around tourism and the two universities.

As of 2014, the city's population was approximately 7300. The City of Lexington government has around 40 staff members that would contribute to the city's web presence.

Lexington also has its own school district, but it is unique in Virginia in that the division only has grades K-8. Students then transition to the Rockbridge County School district to attend high school. Lexington City Schools serves approximately 500 students, with around 55 full- and part-time faculty and staff members.

Our Audience
Our primary audience is our local citizens. Our needs are typical of a municipal website: citizens seek information and alerts regarding city services, events, and activities. They may seek to pay a bill (we utilize a third-party vendor for online payments, but the website provides a link), or obtain contact information.

Our secondary audience is people who potentially want to work for the City of Lexington (hence the need for an easy-to-use employment page), and our third audience is business vendors who seek to contract with the city via bids. Lastly, the city would like to use the web site for the purposes of economic development and redevelopment, providing information on taxes, fees, processes, demographics and other data that would be useful to those looking to do or locate a business in the City of Lexington.

New Website Objectives
Our website's number one objective is to provide information and services in a clear manner. We wish to minimize the amount of navigation required by citizens to reach their objective. The City must be presented in a positive and professional manner.

Next, our staff members must be able to easily maintain and update the site, without dependence on the IT staff or other tech-savvy employees.

The final objective is to make our new website a part of our city-wide integration initiative. Given the small size of Lexington, many of the departments are shared between the city government and the city schools. For example, staff members of the IT and Finance departments are shared between the two agencies. Furthermore, certain software packages (helpdesk and financial management) are also used jointly. We wish to pull the schools into the new website, providing a consistent theme and simplify IT's training and maintenance responsibilities.

Current Websites
Our current website, http://lexingtonva.gov, is about 2 years old. The design is too cluttered (for example, a variety of menus are placed across the top, left-side, right-side, and footer of each page). This makes navigation overly complicated and confusing. We desire a more obvious and direct path for our visitors to obtain information.

On the back-end, the content management system (CMS) is too advanced for some of our staff members, which intimidates them and discourages updates. Furthermore, even tech-savvy staff have been frustrated with the speed by which edits are made, and the workflow is jilted. We require a higher-performing CMS that can easily by managed by non-technical staff.

The Lexington City Schools website, https://lexedu.org, was developed by an amateur. The back-end Drupal CMS has always been difficult for faculty and staff to maintain; again, a professional, intuitive CMS would greatly help with usability, and therefore increase the amount and quality of posted updates.

New Website Functionality Requirements
Our new website will need:

- A user-friendly CMS
- An intuitive navigation for the end-user
- A clean design, free of clutter

- A design that scales well to mobile platforms
- The ability for citizens to sign up for update notifications
- The ability for staff to easily post news items/alerts, both departmentally and site-wide
- The ability to post agenda items and minutes and the ability to easily archive and search agenda items, minutes and other documents.
- The ability to post and manage bids, organized by department
- The ability to create and manage web forms
- Support for multiple domains (e.g., for the fire department, police department, etc.)
- To be optimized with SEO best practices
- All applicable content imported from current site
- CMS training
- Hosting services
- Customer support

Optional New Website Functionalities

We would also appreciate the following features, depending on how these elements would impact timeline and/or budget. Please provide cost for these elements separately, and note if any additional design or development time would be required.

- Social media integration (share buttons on posts, follow buttons, etc.)
- Blogs for staff (mayor, city manager, fire chief, police chief, teachers, etc.)
- The ability to tweak design elements/structure for various departments
- Private staff intranet

Budget Details

As listed in the summary, our budget for this project is around $20,000. While we of course prefer the most cost-effective solution, all proposals that fall reasonably within this range will be considered and weighed based on their merits.

Around 30% of the available budget is allocated in FY16 (ending June 30), while the remainder will be available on July 1, 2016.

Proposal Requirements

Please include the following in your proposal response:

- Overview of your company
- Overview of how you will meet our objectives
- Explanation of your proposed platform/CMS
- Outline of your website design & development strategy
- Proposed website timeline from kickoff to launch
- Details about your team
- Recent design & development examples
- Links to publicly available CMS tutorials
- References
- Any key differentiators about you?
- Pricing with optional elements line-itemed
- Terms & conditions

RFQ & Project Timeline Details

RFQ Sent:　　　　　February 17, 2016
Responses Due:　　　March 11, 2016 at 5:00 pm EST
Winner Contacted:　March 17, 2016
Project Kick-off:　　March 21, 2016
Launch Target:　　　July 1, 2016